

is to encourage youngsters to become teachers. That means, of course, safe classrooms. It means making sure teachers can teach a curriculum that works.

There's nothing better than combining the love of a teacher with the talent and tools necessary to be able to make sure children learn. But it also means convincing teachers of the importance and power of accountability. A good teacher welcomes accountability, because a good teacher understands that measurement is the kernel for success. A good teacher will be able to see in real stark terms the fruits of his or her labor. A good teacher is somebody who says, "Give me a chance to succeed, and I can prove I can succeed."

There's a lot of people in our society who fear accountability. Dr. Shannon, when asked by one of the Members of the congressional delegation about accountability, she said, "At first people were afraid of accountability." And I can understand that. If you haven't been held accountable, and all of a sudden somebody starts holding you accountable, it's going to create a certain sense of anxiety. But I suspect she'll testify to this fact, that once the accountability measures came in place, once people got used to what it meant to be accountable—that accountability is not a tool to punish but a tool to reward and a tool necessary to correct deficiencies; it's a positive tool; it's a positive application—then people begin to accept the importance of a strong measurement system.

So we're here to applaud leadership and teachers, and we're here to applaud a school and a district that has got a vision, a vision of high standards and strong measurement systems; a school that not only measures, but when it finds deficiency, corrects; a school that recognizes an accountability will work when you view each child as a child, not as some group—part of a group. Accountability system says every child matters, and when we find a child deficient, we're going to correct.

Some say, "The accountability systems tend to restrict curriculum, that, oh, all the school will do is teach the test." This school proves that's not the case. This school focuses on basic education in reading and math. And

by the way, they've got a fabulous curriculum for reading, one that works.

But this school also is a school that enriches beyond the basics of reading and math. It's a school that's got a curriculum that is focused on basic education, but it's a school also that understands the importance of the arts. It's a school that broadens the horizons of the students.

We're here to tout excellence and to thank—to thank the good folks in this institution, inside this building, who love our children and are willing to put their love into practice in a system that works.

So, Dr. Shannon, thank you very much for having us. We're so honored to be here. Again, I want to thank the Members of the congressional delegation that came up, as well. It's a real treat to be able to walk around the halls of a successful school and, most importantly, be able to look children in the eye and wish them all the best, encourage them to go to college. But thanks for having us. It's our honor to be here.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. in the multi-purpose room. In his remarks, he referred to Nancy R. Shannon, principal, Merritt Extended Elementary School; and Paul L. Vance, superintendent, District of Columbia Public Schools.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Education Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

January 25, 2001

Legislative Agenda on Education

The President. Thank you all for coming. It's an honor to be here with the chairman and ranking member of the committee, members of the Education Committee in the House of Representatives.

We're going to spend a lot of time talking about education until a bill works its way through the House and the Senate. It's a priority of mine, but the good news is, it's also a priority of the Members here around the table. And I am actually confident that we can forge an education bill that will achieve a lot of objectives: high standards, local control of schools, but the most important objective of all is that every child in America gets

educated. It is a national priority, and it's a goal that I'm actually confident that this great Nation can achieve.

So it's an honor to welcome Members of the Congress here to have a frank discussion. I'll be glad to answer a few questions.

Federal Reserve Chairman's Congressional Testimony

Q. Is there a comment at all on Mr. Greenspan's comment this morning on the need for tax cuts and the effect it might have on the economy?

The President. I was pleased to hear Mr. Greenspan's words. I felt they were measured and just right. He recognizes that we need good monetary policy and sound fiscal policy to make sure that the economy grows. So I was pleased.

Q. He also seemed to indicate that having the tax cut in place was one of the issues—or one of the main criteria in having a tax cut that would benefit the economy. Do you read that as support for a retroactive tax cut or an accelerated measure?

The President. I don't think Alan Greenspan was supporting any particular plan. I know he wasn't going to the Hill to say, "Well, President Bush has got the right plan." I felt like he was speaking about policy in general. His job is to report to the Congress in an objective way, and that's exactly how I read it.

I've got my view of how to enact tax relief. I suspect others in the Congress will have their view. But what Alan Greenspan was saying to the Nation is that in order to make sure our economy grows, we've got to have good monetary policy and sound fiscal policy, a component of which is wise spending, as well as tax relief.

Bipartisanship

Representative John A. Boehner. Mr. President, on behalf of my colleagues—if I could just say something.

On behalf of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I want to thank you for inviting us here. All week you've spent a great deal of time talking about your proposal but, more importantly, meeting with Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle, trying to

build consensus for this very serious proposal.

And on behalf of all of us, I just want to say, thank you.

The President. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Dinner With Catholic Leaders

Q. Mr. President, you're meeting tonight with the Archbishop; what do you hope to accomplish?

The President. I hope to have a good meal. [Laughter] I will tell you something about the Cardinal-to-be and the other leaders I'll be meeting with. These are men of great faith, huge compassion for the poor and the oppressed. I can't wait to talk to them about education reform, because education to the Cardinal-to-be is a paramount concern. He knows what we know: An educated child is one much more likely to realize the greatness of America. And I'm going to discuss that, and I'm there to listen, as well. It's a huge honor to go there, and I'm looking forward to it.

Faith-Based Initiatives

Q. Mr. President, how do you expect to address concerns about separation of church and state in dealing with faith-based initiatives, both for education and other services?

The President. I'll have a lot to say about that next week. But I will just tell you this, that a compassionate society is one which recognizes the great power of faith, not a particular religion, for the great power faith can play in the lives of everyday citizens and that we in Government must not fear faith-based programs. We must welcome faith-based programs.

This issue was debated, hotly debated in the Congress in previous sessions, all based upon what's called charitable choice, which is a constitutional provision which recognizes Government will never fund religion. But Government should not fear funding programs that can change people's lives, nor should Government fear funding—providing funding for an individual and allow that individual to choose a faith-based program, so long as there is a secular alternative available.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:07 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Archbishop Theodore E.

McCarrick of the Archdiocese of Washington, who will be elevated to cardinal on February 21 at a ceremony at the Vatican. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Colin L. Powell as Secretary of State

January 26, 2001

The President. Thank you all for coming. It is a great privilege for all of us to be here for the swearing in of our new Secretary of State. It's also a great privilege to be here with Alma, the true strength of the Powell family.

As I said in my Inaugural Address, America remains involved in the world, by history and by choice, shaping a balance of power that favors freedom. To achieve this goal, we need a foreign policy that serves America's vital interests and speaks for our highest ideals, a foreign policy that is clear and consistent and confident, true to our values and true to our friends.

To lead this effort at this unique moment in history, I picked a unique leader. Many times over the past four decades, America has called on Colin Powell, and each time he has answered the call. When his country called him to serve as a foot soldier, Colin Powell answered the call. When his country needed him to help defeat a tyrant brutalizing his neighbors and destabilizing a vital region of the world, he answered the call. When America needed him to serve the high purpose of building the character of our young and to promote volunteerism, he answered the call.

Today America calls on Colin Powell again. He is a leader who understands that America must work closely with our friends in times of calm if we want to be able to call upon them in times of crisis. He understands that our Nation is at its best when we project our strength and purpose with humility. He understands that if we do not set our own agenda, it will be set by others, by adversaries abroad or by the crisis of the day.

I know of no better person to be the face and voice of America diplomacy than Colin Powell. His dignity and integrity will add to

the strength and authority of America around the world.

Congratulations, Mr. Secretary.

[At this point, Secretary Powell made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:53 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Alma Powell, wife of Secretary Powell. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Powell.

Remarks at a Luncheon With Freshman Members of the House of Representatives

January 26, 2001

Welcome to the people's house. Here we are in week one. I hope you're as enthused about your job as I am about mine. I, first, look forward to saying hello to each of you, and I know the Vice President does, as well.

We've begun a series of policy initiatives. First is education. I've been meeting with mostly the senior Members of the House and Senate—although, a few freshmen have shown up in the meetings—to hear about a vision that I think is so important for America, and that is, every child get educated and a way to do so.

There will be other issues that we'll be talking about: military preparedness, Medicare and health care, Social Security reform, tax relief. And I look forward to working with you all. I come to Washington with a positive spirit of the possible, that I refuse to let any bitterness that may be lingering around inhibit us from rising above the expectations of the American people.

The people—some people—take a look at the election and say, "Well, gosh, the country is too divided. Nothing will happen." Our mission is to prove them wrong. It's to not only restore faith in Government by results, positive results for the people, but also to restore faith in Government by how we behave, by how we conduct the people's business. I know we can do it.